Turnover tax levied on drugs by State Governments

3526. SHRI G. SWAMINATHAN: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that many State Governments are levying turnover tax on drugs which is a price controlled commodity; and

(b) if so, whether Government would come forward either to advice the State Governments for withdrawing such levy or to incorporate the same in the MAPE allowed to manufacturers under DPCO?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI AJIT PANJA): (a) There is no such information.

(b) Does not arise.

Mutual fund business by the private sector units

3527. SHRI MUKHTIAR SINGH MALIK:
SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item which appeared in "The Hindustan Times" of the 14th February, 1989 to the effect that private sector units may be allowed by Government to enter Mutual Fund Business in order to provide greater competition and efficiency in the conduct of Mutual Fund Business; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO): (a) Government has not allowed private sector units to enter the mutual fund activity.

(b) Does not arise in view of reply to (a) above.

Setting up of Irrigation Finance Corporation

3528. SHRI MUKHTIAR SINGH MALIK:
SHRI CHITTA BASU:

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal under Government's consideration to set up an Irrigation Finance Corporation.

(b) if so, what are the details thereof;

(c) by when it is likely to be set up; and

(d) how far it will be beneficial to the farmers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRIMATI KRISHNA SAHI): (a) to (c) Setting up of Irrigation Finance Corporation to provide adequate financial assistance to nationally important projects is under consideration. As the matter has a bearing on a number of Centre-State issues including devolution of funds, no definite time frame can be indicated.

(d) Completion of such projects would increase irrigation facilities resulting in benefits to the farmers.

Vacancies of Judges in Madras High Court

3529. SHRI V. GOPALSAMY:
SHRI T. R. BALU:

Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of vacancies of Judges in Madras High Court to be filled up as on date and the dates from which each post fell vacant;

(b) the date on which the post of Chief Justice of Madras High Court has fallen vacant;

(c) whether any proposal has been received from Tamil Nadu Government to increase the strength of Judges of Madras High Court from 25 to 32; if so, what steps are being taken to fill up the vacancies including that of Chief Justice;

(d) how many cases are pending before Madras High Court as on date and how many of them are there, five and ten years old, categorywise; and

(e) what steps are being taken to dispose of all the old cases?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE AND THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI B. SHANKARANAND): (a) There are 4 vacancies and these arose on 23-11-87, 14.3.88, 7.11.88 and 14.12.88.

(b) 14.3.88.

(c) Yes, Sir. It is proposed to call for the views of the present State Government. Recommendations of the present State Government for filling up the vacancies have not been received. The question of filling up the vacancy of Chief Justice is engaging the attention of the Government.

(d) Upto date information regarding cases pending in the Madras High Court is not available. However, as on 31-12-87, 195443 cases were pending in the High Court. The category-wise pendency is as follows:—

	Civil	Criminal
Over 3 years	64886	2068
Over 5 years	24962	298
Over 10 years	612	1

(e) The steps taken to reduce pendency in High Courts include suitable amendments to the Civil Procedure Code, grouping together of cases involving common questions of law, fixing short dates for hearings, and dispensing with printing of records in many cases. Recommendations for reducing arrears on the basis of a Report by a Committee on three Chief Justices have also been sent to the High Courts, including Madras High Court for appropriate action.

Holidays in High Courts

3530. SHRI V. GOPALSAMY: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of working days in each High Court in the country at present;

(b) whether there is any proposal to reduce the number of holidays of High Courts in view of increasing pendency of cases; and

(c) if not, what steps are being taken to rationalise holidays of High Courts in the country?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE AND THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI B. SHANKARANAND): (a) At present all the High Courts in the country are working for a minimum of 210 days.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) There is no proposal to rationalise the holidays of High Courts in the country.

Rise in Imports

3531. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) what is the percentage rise in the country's exports during April-September, 1988 and since October, 1988 till February, 1989 as against the imports during the period and by what percentage the country's foreign exchange reserve has fallen with the rise in imports;

(b) what are the maior causes for the increasing imports and declining exports; and

(c) to what extent the import liberalisation has helped in improving the country's exports so far and whether any review is contemplated by Government with regard to the import policy?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. R. DAS MUNSHI): (a) The foreign trade data is compiled on financial year basis, and is available for ten months of the fiscal year 1988-89. According to the provisional figures, India's exports and